

DOCKET INDEX  
**MITCHELL VS. QUESTAR**  
**FORMAL COMPLAINT**

<b>DOCKET#</b> 08-057-08	<b>In the Matter:</b> the Formal Complaint of Mitchell Against Questar Gas Company	56661
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>SS#</b>
March 20, 2008	Formal Complaint  * Exhibit A	f:h:c\08-057-08\032008fc f:h:c\08-057-08\032008fc exA.pdf
March 20, 2008	Action Request, Due: April 21, 2008	56660

# ACTION REQUEST

Date: March 20, 2008

FROM: Public Service Commission

Due: 04/21/08

SUBJECT: Formal Complaint: Mitchell vs. Questar Gas Company; 08-057-08

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Company Name, Case Number, etc.)

This is a request for the Division to conduct:

\_\_\_\_\_ Review Tariff Compliance

\_\_\_\_\_ Analysis of Complaint

\_\_\_\_\_ Investigation

  X   Other

## EXPLANATION AND STATEMENT OF ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

\_\_\_\_\_  
03/20/08

08-057-07

(1) FORMAL COMPLAINT In the Matter of the Formal Complaint of Mitchell Against Questar Gas Company

0805708

COMPLAINT FORM

RECEIVED UTAH PUBLIC  
DIVISION OF UTILITIES

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Heber M. Wells State Office Building

169 East 300 South, Fourth Floor  
Box 45585

Salt Lake City, Utah 84145

2008 MAR 20 A 7:34  
MAR 20 A 8:41

RECEIVED

1. Name of Complaint: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone No.: [REDACTED]

The utility being complained against is: Qwestar [REDACTED]

2. What did the utility do which you (the Complainant) think is illegal, unjust, or improper? Include exact dates, times, locations and persons involved, as closely as you can. When I received my

monthly bill in December I was shocked to see a line item that said

\*Correction \$299.09 There was no explanation in the bill as to what

the correction was. Later I received a letter of explanation and month-by-month

accounting for the correction. I am not sure when it was in my mail. It was dated Dec. 5 but

I don't think I received it before leaving for my daughter's for the holidays.

3. Why do you (the Complainant) think these activities are illegal, unjust or improper?

How would I know a faulty transponder (could I even know a transponder if I swore?)

had been installed? How do I know the one measuring my gas consumption

is accurate? How can I trust or even believe what this monopoly has to say?

4. What relief does the Complainant request? Remove the "correction."

Show me my neighbors consumption rates.

Prove the "transponder" is accurate

5. Signature of Complainant [REDACTED]

Dated: 3/18/08

# QUESTAR GAS COMPANY

## CUSTOMER ACCOUNT ITEMIZATION

NAME

ACCOUNT

Originally Billed			Corrected Billing			Difference
Date	CCF	Amount	Date	CCF	Amount	
11/17/05			11/17/05			\$0.00
12/19/05	283	\$296.70	12/19/05	566	\$587.26	\$290.56
01/20/06	223	\$252.47	01/20/06	446	\$487.91	\$235.44
02/18/06	242	\$245.68	02/18/06	484	\$486.19	\$240.51
03/22/06	215	\$208.16	03/22/06	430	\$411.43	\$203.27
04/19/06	108	\$103.83	04/19/06	216	\$202.25	\$98.42
05/19/06	34	\$35.54	05/19/06	68	\$66.21	\$30.67
06/21/06	12	\$15.82	06/21/06	24	\$26.95	\$11.13
07/20/06	6	\$10.35	07/20/06	12	\$15.34	\$4.99
08/21/06	9	\$12.71	08/21/06	18	\$20.19	\$7.48
09/20/06	14	\$16.20	09/20/06	28	\$27.29	\$11.09
10/20/06	86	\$73.75	10/20/06	172	\$142.40	\$68.65
11/17/06	45	\$122.85	11/17/06	290	\$240.51	\$117.66
12/19/06	214	\$181.24	12/19/06	428	\$357.23	\$175.99
01/23/07	312	\$255.00	01/23/07	624	\$497.65	\$242.65
02/20/07	191	\$162.46	02/20/07	382	\$319.76	\$157.30
03/21/07	131	\$114.45	03/21/07	262	\$223.66	\$109.21
04/23/07	99	\$81.47	04/23/07	198	\$157.80	\$76.33
05/21/07	30	\$29.80	05/21/07	60	\$54.39	\$24.59
06/21/07	23	\$21.69	06/21/07	46	\$38.20	\$16.51
07/24/07	8	\$11.22	07/24/07	16	\$17.02	\$5.80
08/22/07	9	\$11.82	08/22/07	18	\$18.40	\$6.58
09/20/07	8	\$11.52	09/20/07	16	\$17.83	\$6.31
10/22/07	51	\$40.46	10/22/07	102	\$75.73	\$35.27
11/20/07	165	\$130.98	11/20/07	330	\$253.66	\$122.68
TOTAL	2518	\$2,446.17		5236	\$4,745.26	\$2,299.09

# INFORMAL COMPLAINT

Complaint # 1042

New



Add Company

Utility Company Questar Gas

## CUSTOMER INFORMATION

Customer Name: Mitchell, [REDACTED] Phone Number: [REDACTED]  
Other Contact Info: [REDACTED] Other Phone: [REDACTED]  
Account Number: [REDACTED] Email Address: [REDACTED]  
Customer Address: [REDACTED] OK to Release: ☐  
Customer Address: [REDACTED]  
City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]

## COMPLAINT INFORMATION

Complaint Type: Additional Charges Date Received: 1/14/2008 Date Closed: 1/17/2008  
Complaint Received By: Rea DPU Analyst Assigned: [REDACTED]  
Utility Company Analyst: [REDACTED] Company at Fault: ☐  
Complaint Description: Actual Slam Case: ☐ Actual Cram Case: ☐

COMPLAINT: My bill dated December 4, 2007 had a line item shown as "Corrections" and showed charges following of \$2,176.41 with no explanation of what the corrections were. I called and was told it was due to replacing the transponder which was defective and had to be replaced. This defective equipment apparently measured usage incorrectly. I have no idea if this is a fabrication and I am especially angry that a cahрге of \$2,176.41 can be levied with no consultation and no explanation. We though our hnatural gas consumptin had gone gone down a little due to new insulation we had installed. It appears Questar went through their records and found that our bill was a little less and decided to give us a correction fee. This is also after the fact. I protest having to pay this ludicrous amount. If they made a mistake they sould pay for it anyway. That is what we consumers do. Please advise. Thanks, Nancy and George Mitchell

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION: Remove the correction charges.

RELEASE TO PRESS: Yes

### Complaint Response:

Attached is the letter, usage summary, and itemization that I sent to [REDACTED]. I also included historical usage and a copy of the letter, itemization, and statement that the biller sent to him on 12/5/07. I don't know why he didn't get it, but I apologized that it happened. The biller even noted on her file that she held the letter and itemization until she got a copy of the corrected statement. Anyway, They can review the information and get back to me with any questions, or to set up a payment plan. Completed by Linda Kizerian on 11/17/08.

January 17, 2008

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

This letter is in response to your recent call to the Division of Public Utilities regarding your gas account for the above address. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your concerns.

Our gas meters are read each month through a transponder; a small radio receiver/transmitter that sends meter reads to a radio-equipped vehicle. On 11/30/07, during a routine inspection of the gas meter and transponder, it was discovered that the meter index read 7139 and the transponder read was 2917. The difference, 4,222 CCF of gas, had gone through your meter but had not been billed. It's important that you understand that the transponder wasn't "defective or malfunctioning". When the transponder was installed, the counting mechanism was set incorrectly and the transponder was only recording half of the actual usage each month. The transponder has been reprogrammed and will now record gas usage at the same rate as the meter index. During the time when the transponder was under-recording the gas usage; the meter index continued to record accurately. We are in the process of visually checking all of our meters and transponders to insure they are recording at the same rate. Again, the transponder did not malfunction or break, it was set incorrectly at installation by the contractor who installed it. After checking 200,000 gas meters and transponders, our most recent figures show 99 transponders were installed with incorrect settings, resulting in recording discrepancies between the transponder and the meter. While achieving 100% accuracy is our goal, the current error ratio of .05% confirms that 99.95% of the transponders were installed correctly.

As you can see on the enclosed billing histories, the average yearly usage from 1998 through 2003 was 242.7 decatherms. After the transponder was installed, the average annual gas usage dropped to 139.8 decatherms. This illustrates very clearly that only one-half of the gas usage was being recorded by the transponder.

[REDACTED]  
January 17, 2008  
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The Public Service Commission Rules allow Questar Gas Company to correct the billing for 24 months in the case of underbilling. We corrected the bills from November 2005 through November 2007. The account holder is entitled to the same amount of time, 24 months, to pay for the billing adjustment. We can set the balance of the billing adjustment, \$2,299.09, on a 24-month, interest free payment plan at \$96.00 a month. Each monthly statement would include the current charges and bill an additional \$96.00 toward the adjustment balance.

I apologize for the inconvenience this has caused. Unfortunately, with the introduction of new technology, there often are a small number of unanticipated problems. As this came to our attention, we've stepped up inspections in an effort to identify any existing errors as quickly as possible.

Enclosed is information that may be helpful in understanding the billing correction. I've also enclosed brochures for the HEAT Program and Red Cross Utility Assistance. Both of these programs have funds available for qualified households. A pamphlet is also enclosed on our Deferred Payment Agreement, if you're interested in this option. Please look through the material and if you have further questions, you may contact me directly at (801) 324-3310.

Sincerely,

Linda Kizerian  
Consumer Affairs

Cc: Division of Public Utilities  
Enclosures

[REDACTED]  
Account number: [REDACTED]

Historical gas usage from January 1998 through December 2003

Annual usage for 6-year period totaled 14,566 therms / 1,456.5 decatherms

□ Yearly average – 2,427 therms / 242.7 decatherms

Annual cost for 6-year period totaled \$8,591.94

□ Yearly average - \$1,431.99

Gas usage and cost from January 2004 through November 2007

Annual usage for 4-year period totaled 5,593 therms / 559.3 decatherms

□ Yearly average - 1,398 therms / 139.8 decatherms

Annual cost for 4-year period totaled \$5,038.72

□ Yearly average - \$1,259.68

**Additional Information:**

